

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

OCT 11 1961

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION
& EDUCATION

A Christian Journal of Opinion

The Resumption of Nuclear Testing

The international situation was already very grim, and the Berlin crisis reminded us that we were living on the rim of disaster; then Russia announced to the world that it would resume nuclear testing. She has subsequently exploded four bombs in Siberia. Up to the moment of this writing none of them have been of the megaton dimension that Khrushchev rather gratuitously announced as within Russian capabilities. The information was gratuitous, for it is generally understood that these super-super-bombs are within reach of both sides.

Everyone naturally asked why Khrushchev took this step and sacrificed the propaganda lead he had so assiduously built up among the uncommitted world by his feigned devotion to complete disarmament. It was particularly strange that he should have chosen the time of the meeting of the "nonaligned" nations in Belgrade to make his announcement.

Our questions were quickly answered by the renewed evidence that the resourceful Khrushchev is probably the shrewdest operator in the business. He didn't have to worry about Belgrade-Tito, Nehru and their followers were content to express the conviction that the resumption of testing brought us nearer to war but without condemning the Russian policy.

One of Tito's anonymous underlings leaked the information that it was wise not to be too furious

with Mr. K. because it was necessary for him, on the eve of the Communist Party Congress, to prove his toughness both to the hard core of Stalinists and to the intransigent Chinese. Tito may be right at that, for Khrushchev has the difficult task of proving to the old believers that he is not "soft on capitalism," while he tries to convince the Russian world that he can gain all they want without war.

It is, of course, a dangerous game. Hitler succeeded in playing the game up to the point where he lost. One shudders to think that the catastrophe that would follow the final miscalculation would be immeasurably more tragic than Hitler's setting off the fuse of World War II.

Our reactions to the Russian policy were naturally more resolute than those of the rather futile Belgrade leaders, who could offer no better proposal than another summit conference. Khrushchev welcomed the suggestion. For the moment he seems to have all the cards and is willing to play a propaganda game bound to give him many advantages. President Kennedy was naturally forced to yield to mounting pressure; he decided that we also would resume testing, though in underground caverns to avoid the contamination of the air of the whole world.

The next step on which the Western allies embarked seems of dubious value. Britain and the US challenged Russia to agree to keep the tests

Vol. XXI, No. 16, October 2, 1961 \$5.00 per year; 25 cents a copy

underground. The wily Khrushchev, in a memorable interview with Cyrus Sulzberger of *The New York Times*, was quick to point out that this proposal solved nothing in reaching an accord on nuclear weapons, which 38 months of futile negotiations had proved difficult to reach. Furthermore, he called attention to the fact that France, which was testing in the Sahara, was not involved in the proposal. He insinuated that France was acting for the whole West, a ridiculous suggestion but not an implausible one in the non-European nations.

In short, our counter proposals have been lame. No wonder Mr. K. feels confident that he can gain his objectives in Berlin without arousing the world too much and without starting another war.

Since, as Walter Lippmann points out, he has put us in a corner in Berlin by not following Stalin's policy of denying our rights in the city but only by denying the rights of East Germans through sealing off the eastern from the western Berlin and making its economic life untenable, the Administration will have to be resourceful indeed to save Berlin short of war. It probably can be done, but no one can deny that we are wrestling with a resolute and resourceful foe on the very rim of the abyss of disaster. The general confidence in both Russia and America that, despite the great dangers, war now is not a probability may be justified by the fortunate cool-headedness of both adversaries.

It may, on the other hand, be nothing but the unguarded nonchalance described in Scripture, the "marrying and giving in marriage" before the Last Judgment. Thus modern history has moved into the eschatological dimension in which all our judgments are made under the shadow of the final judgment. May the Lord have mercy on our souls.

R.N.

THE CHINA ISSUES IN PERSPECTIVE

BEFORE some new phase of propaganda or some new problem for decision, whether petty or great, stirs our sullen apathy about our relations with China, the most numerous of the human family, it is well to try to think of them steadily and whole. Half again as many as the peoples of India, three times as many as all the Latin-Americans or all the black Africans, overpoweringly significant for the Koreans, the Jap-

anese, the Filipinos, and all the nations of Southeast Asia, the Chinese people mean much to the world now and in the future. They presumably mean much to God if he is, as Christians assert, the Father of all mankind.

The central issue is this: How should the intense and exclusive Chinese totalitarian system and its dangerous ambitions be met? There are few indeed who feel that military attack should be made upon it; few, even, who would anticipate with hopeful delight an attempt to coerce China proper in the course of operations originally begun to defend South Korea, Taiwan or some other territory against possible Chinese aggression. The actual choice is between two alternatives: (1) the present policy of exclusion from the United Nations and from ordinary contacts—economic and cultural as well as political—with the automatic result of justifying, maintaining and reinforcing the Chinese type of exclusiveness that is directed particularly toward the United States and all that is comprised in *our* conception of a "free world;" (2) a relaxation of mutual exclusions *under the best terms obtainable*—given China as it is and we as we are—after an evil fifteen years and more of history.

The bankrupt absurdity of the old policy is that not a few Americans look to Khrushchev almost as an ally, one who has associations and therefore influence with Peking, to restrain by persuasion or by hostility the propensities of the state with which we want no association but only the fruits that must derive from association. In the long pull, the world will tend toward the better, as we see it, only if China *changes* within and in its dealings with others. How do our acts and attitudes affect the probability and the character of such change?

Neither China nor the United States, even with planned overproduction of ostriches in each country, can act alone or determine by itself the pattern of world relations for the other. Despite all actual and alleged differences from Russia, China confronting the United States and our associates has fundamental common interests with the senior, fully industrialized Communist state. "The China problem" in a basic sense is part of the global problem of Communist power, which cannot be dealt with in Berlin and Moscow alone, much less in occasional spasms of attention to Havana and Stanleyville. We must also take Peking a thou-

sand times more seriously than has yet been the case.

The total number of states that have had more to do with China than we have, plus others who believe that the present divided world requires universal association in the United Nations rather than a club of discriminatory practice—ridiculously impossible when all political colors are already inside—now runs high. Indeed, there are top-grade statesmen in many and varied countries who feel that exclusion is both stupid and unjust and that it must and will be constructively revised, with or without the consent of the emotionally rigid United States.

An important secondary issue is Taiwan, which, with one-sixtieth the human freight of China, has succeeded terminologically and by legal formalism in shrouding the major issue for Americans. Of course we do not want to abandon to Peking a further eleven millions of the Chinese race, nor to shake the confidence of the non-Communist states from Japan and Korea south and southwestward. But there remain the dangerous provocations of the offshore islands, the claims to the mainland and the shadow government maintained for the apocalyptic day of return, the insistence upon the exclusive right to speak for China in the United Nations, including the permanent place in the Security Council, and the

dubious means to veto any action viewed as favorable to Peking—all these possible only because of the military and political support of the United States to a regime that otherwise has not been viable. The discrepancy between hard reality and the present artificial front is extreme. If not reduced by statesmanship, it will be resolved by disaster.

This brief discussion does not enter into the frailties of the Taiwan regime, anxiously understood by some thoughtful men on that island who fear defects of character and inner conflicts so great that in foreseeable crises the Communists might be able to take over with surprising ease. Nor does this discussion elaborate the known oppressions and grievous evils of the Peking system, fundamental to everything we are considering.

American sentiment on the whole matter, with not one member of Congress daring to express himself against resolutions of unqualified commitment to the exclusion policy, requires analysis. We must here be content with calling for another look in large perspective, a readiness to seek solutions not yet visible, solutions to a problem of awful grandeur soon to be suffused with planetary dread. Peking with the bomb will cause us to wish we had begun to face squarely Peking without the bomb.

M. S. B.

No Single Religion Has a Monopoly on Spiritual Truths

The Plurality of Religions: Blemish or Blessing?

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

WHEN I was invited to write an article for *Christianity and Crisis*, I started by reading Dean John C. Bennett's article on "Christ and Non-Christians" that had appeared in the May 15 issue. The train of thought that this article set going in my mind has led me to the following considerations. Dean Bennett's article is, indeed, a stimulating one. I have never read so clear and, at the same time, charitable an exposition of what should be the attitude of Christians towards non-Christians and non-Christian religions.

Dean Bennett's article is, I should say, a model not only for Christians but for the adherents of any other of the living higher religions. The same clearness and charity could be brought to bear by

a spokesman for Buddhism, for instance, in expounding what should be the attitude of Buddhists towards non-Buddhists and their religions. Perhaps the Editorial Board of *Christianity and Crisis* could find representatives of Buddhism, Islam, Judaism and Zoroastrianism who would discuss, in Dean Bennett's spirit, our common problem of the plurality of religions. This would make a notable series of articles. It would help the adherents of each of the religions to gain a fuller understanding of their own respective positions as a result of their having made the effort to understand the positions of their neighbors.

The attitude that Dean Bennett (if I interpret him rightly) is seeking to define and establish is one that is psychologically difficult to achieve. It is a combination of firm faith in the truth and in the saving power of one's own religion with full appre-

DR. TOYNBEE, the eminent British historian, has through the years given considerable attention to man's religions in his many books and articles.

ciation of the merits of other religions—and this not just a reluctant appreciation but a cordial one. Like-minded representatives of other religions would probably seek to achieve the same difficult attitude in facing the same problem of plurality; and one may therefore guess that, if they did each take up Dean Bennett's theme from their own religion's points of view, they would write in substantially the same terms down to the end of the section headed "Confession before Polemics."

When they came to "A Sure Source of Corrections," they would surely not take issue with the claim, here made by Dean Bennett, that certain truths of indisputable importance can be seen best in the context of the Christian faith. But no doubt they would wish to supplement this part of Dean Bennett's exposition by submitting, in their turn, that the contexts of their own respective faiths are the best ones for seeing other truths that are of comparable importance—and this not only when looked at from these other religions' particular standpoints.

One can imagine, for instance, a Buddhist submitting that it is in the context of Buddhist faith that the problem of suffering can be best understood—and not just understood, but grappled with and solved. It can be solved, I believe he would say, by the radical cure of plucking out all desire and casting it from one; and this, he would almost certainly go on to say, is not just an impractical counsel of perfection. He would submit that a practicable way of attaining nirvana has been opened up for mankind by the Buddha's personal example and by the course of strenuous spiritual exercises that he has prescribed for other aspirants to this spiritual goal.

A Zoroastrian might submit that it is in the context of Zoroastrian faith that the goodness of God is best vindicated. Zoroastrianism, he would say, has not flinched from facing the problem of evil. It has recognized frankly that it is impossible to reconcile divine goodness with divine omnipotence, and it has held fast to its belief in God's goodness without seeking to evade the logical consequence—which is that God, being wholly good, cannot be all-powerful as well.

Conversely, a Hindu might submit that it is in the context of Hindu faith that the omnipotence of God is best vindicated. Like the Zoroastrian, the Hindu would say that his own religion has not flinched from facing the problem of evil. It has recognized frankly that it is impossible to reconcile divine omnipotence with divine goodness, and it has held fast to its belief in God's omnipotence

without seeking to evade the logical consequence—which is, in Hinduism's view, that God, being omnipotent, must be the responsible author of the evil as well as of the good that is manifestly present in the Universe.

A Jew or a Muslim might submit that it is in the context of Jewish or Muslim faith that the oneness of God is best vindicated. It is vindicated here without equivocation. The Muslim might add that this unequivocal stand on the supreme issue of the oneness of God carries with it, as its corollary, a likewise unequivocal stand on the issue of the One God's human creatures' relations with each other. Islam is one of a number of religions that proclaim, in principle, the equality of all men and their consequent duty to treat each other as brothers, but a Muslim would probably claim that Muslims come the nearest to practicing what their religion preaches, and would go on to make the further claim that this is a direct consequence of the purity of Islamic monotheism.

A Reciprocal Concession

I am unlikely to have succeeded in putting the positions of these non-Christian religions in exactly the form in which their own exponents would like to see them put; and I may not have singled out the points that are of the greatest importance in their eyes. I am venturing for a moment to act as their amateur spokesman in order to make a point of my own. My point is that, if a Christian asks non-Christians to accept the claim that certain important truths can be seen best in the context of Christian faith, he will think twice before refusing to make a reciprocal concession to similar claims when these are put forward on the other religions' behalf.

Let us assume that the adherents of the major religions agree with each other that each faith does provide the best context for seeing certain truths that they all consider to be important. This would lead to the conclusion that the different religions, between them, reveal a greater measure of spiritual truth and provide ampler means of salvation than can be found in any one of them, even at its widest gamut. This is not to say that all these religions are of equal spiritual value. Their gamuts may differ in range, and this perhaps greatly. There may be more truth and more salvation in some of them than in others. No doubt, each religion will appear to its own adherents to have the widest gamut of all. If it did not, they would have abandoned it and adopted another.

This natural and perhaps inevitable partiality towards one's own religion is also naturally and inevitably subjective. The adherents of the several religions are parties to their own respective cases and are consequently disqualified from passing judgment on the relative values of their own and the other faiths. They cannot transcend their own partiality and, therefore, cannot expect their neighbors to transcend theirs. This is not possible, and it also is not called for. All that is called for is a recognition, on all sides, that some truths are seen best, and that some means of salvation are found most effectively, in each of the religions and that, in this realm of spiritual values, no single religion has a monopoly.

If this conclusion were to be accepted as common ground, it would follow that the plurality of religions is not one of the blemishes of the universe but is, on the contrary, a boon for mankind. It is a boon because every one of the spiritual contributions made by the different religions has proved to be of spiritual value for some human beings, and indeed for large numbers of them. This means that if any one of these religions had never made its appearance, or if it were ever to become extinct, the means of illumination and the means of grace accessible to mankind would be, by that much, poorer than they are at present. This is not to say that some single one of the several existing religions may not be capable of providing this or that particular human soul with all the illumination and all the grace that this soul is capable of receiving.

While it is true that the gamut of each religion is limited, it is also true that the gamut of each soul is limited, too. But the gamuts of all souls are not identical with each other, any more than the gamuts of all religions are. There are different types of individual human character, and the plurality of religions is a boon in so far as it provides spiritual food for a range of types that cannot all find their food in any single religion, however wide this religion's gamut may be by comparison with the gamuts of others.

Innate differences of individual character are surely realities. They have been recognized and studied by a long series of investigators. Theophrastus was probably not the first of these, and Jung will surely not have been the last. It seems more likely that the study of human nature is still in its infancy. But perhaps it has already advanced far enough for us to be able to discern that every human being is something more than a standard sample of our common human nature and is, at

the same time, something less than a completely unique personality. Besides being both these things, he is also a representative of one out of a limited number of types of character. As far as we know, this fund of character-types is a common possession of the human race at all times and places. All the types are always to be met with in all races, civilizations, religions and nations. In the field of religion, this or that character-type will find its best spiritual food in something that is best given in this or that particular religious faith.

A Wider Range of Choice

Till quite recently, most people's religious allegiance has been imposed upon them, in advance, by a spiritually irrelevant accident. Most people have inherited, as a matter of course, the prevalent religion of the society into which they have happened to be born—and one's place and date of birth are the most arbitrary, as well as the most decisive, of all the accidents in life. One's inheritance of one's ancestral religion has normally been a matter of course because, so far, most human beings have lived in small insulated social and cultural compartments in which there has rarely been a local plurality of religions and, therefore, rarely an opportunity of choosing one's religion for oneself instead of inheriting it automatically from one's parents and teachers.

There have, however, been some exceptional social milieux—for instance, the Persian, Roman, Chinese and other would-be world-states—in which a number of alternative religions have been at people's disposal to choose from. This situation, which has been exceptional hitherto, seems likely to become normal in our age, in which technology has succeeded in "annihilating distance." In this age of the airplane, telegraph, telephone, radio and television, the cultural heritage of every branch of the human race is coming to be accessible to every other branch.

In this new situation, every individual will have a greater opportunity than has normally been open to people in the past for choosing—when he reaches the age of discretion—the particular religion that seems to best meet his particular spiritual needs. These needs will vary according to the chooser's character-type and individual personality. Already within Western Christendom, it is becoming more and more usual for people who have been brought up as Roman Catholics, as Protestants of this or that denomination, as agnostics or as atheists to choose for themselves, when grown-up, some other

religion or philosophy than the one in which they have happened to be reared.

It is already possible to foresee a time in which the range of choice will have been widened still further, and this not only in Western Christendom. One can foresee Western Christians choosing to become Eastern Christians, Muslims, Buddhists or Hindus, and can also foresee Eastern Christians and Buddhists and Hindus and Muslims choosing to become Protestants or Roman Catholics.

In taking account of this prospect, we have, of course, to bear in mind the truth that in the making of any choice the emotions, as well as the intellect, are always involved. Our emotions place practical limits on the range of choice that the intellect opens up in theory. One's feelings towards the religion in which one has been brought up as a child are bound to be different from one's feelings towards a religion that one deliberately adopts, as a substitute, at some later stage of life. If one clings to one's ancestral religion, the motive is unlikely to be simply an intellectual conviction that it has a higher spiritual value than another; an affection inspired by familiarity is also likely to weigh heavily in the balance. On the other hand, if one does wrench oneself away from one's ancestral religion, the emotional effort that this will demand is likely to transform affection into hostility. An ex-Roman Catholic, for instance, is notoriously apt to become not just a non-Catholic, but an anti-clerical. It is psychologically difficult to "get inside" a religion in which one has not been brought up as a child.

A religion that one has adopted in adult life out of intellectual conviction will not so easily win one's heart. On the other hand, if it does win it, this emotional tour de force is likely to inspire one with something of that zeal of the convert that animated, for example, St. Paul and St. Augustine. Not only does conversion have limiting conditions, but when, in spite of these, it is achieved, it brings with it new problems of its own. All the same, the possibility of choice between one's ancestral religion and a number of others is surely a spiritual boon for any human soul, considering how great the chances are that its ancestral religion will not happen to be the one that best meets its spiritual needs.

God's Deliberate Work

Judaism, Christianity and Islam hold in common an illogical belief. They believe that God is both wholly good and omnipotent. The illogicality

of this belief is unacceptable to Hindus and to Zoroastrians. But the logical untenability of the Judaic religions' position does not necessarily put them out of court, for here we may be at the limits of the capacity of the human reason; and the reason cannot guarantee that there are not more things in heaven and earth than those that can be formulated in logical terms.

Suppose that Zoroastrianism and Hinduism agree, on this ground, to suspend their adverse logical verdict and to let the Judaic religions' illogical account of God's character pass as being non-disprovable in religion's trans-rational dimension of spiritual insight. This Judaic vision of what is God's nature seems bound to lead, if given the green light, to the conclusion that the plurality of religions has been the deliberate work of God's omnipotence acting under the inspiration of his goodness. God's goodness must mean mercy, compassion and love where he is dealing with his creatures; and this divine love, compassion and mercy must embrace all God's creatures without discrimination. God must care equally for all his human creatures in virtue of his goodness; and, if so, he must have used his omnipotence to provide for the spiritual illumination and salvation of human beings of every type of character. He must have provided for this at all times and places since man's pre-human ancestors were transfigured into human beings—transfigured, that is to say, into creatures that are spiritually capable, and also spiritually in need, of receiving light and of attaining salvation.

CORRESPONDENCE

Tempest in a Teapot

TO THE EDITORS: Harvey Cox's "Miss America and the Cult of the Girl" (Aug. 7 issue) is the usual preposterous nonsense of a liberal fanatic (which means one who takes himself too seriously . . .). It is a good thing that American people do not take themselves as seriously as Mr. Cox takes them. Where else but in the deep recesses of Mr. Cox's cranium do "throats tighten and eyes moisten" at the mention of, rather, at the introduction of Miss America? Certainly not in any of the living rooms in which I have spent my misguided life (this writer wasn't always a preacher, and has seen people all over the country in their natural habitat).

It is this writer's careful observation . . . that the bulk of the people in this country not only don't know who Miss America is, they couldn't care less! They watch it because, after all, what is there for a guy to do—after working at a lathe all day and consuming ten hours of life

Continued on page 168

The Undivided Church in a Divided City*

FRANKLIN H. LITTELL

A GATHERING of Christians that runs for a week and ends in a mass rally of a third of a million people would be unusual at any time. Last summer, when Berlin was the center of world tension, the "Rally of the Church" was dramatic indeed.

The Berlin 1961 *Kirchentag* gives every indication of taking its place in history with the great rallies of the past: Berlin 1951 and Leipzig 1954. In 1951, about 250,000 people took part. In 1954, in the heart of Communist East Germany, 650,000 rallied to the sign of the cross. This year, in this island city—a free city 110 miles behind the Iron Curtain—Christians gathered in the face of the most severe attacks and pressures, both without and within, that have yet been suffered by the great German laymen's movement.

The *Kirchentag* was founded in 1949 by a man who is one of the heroic figures of the 20th century: Reinold von Thadden, a landowner and lawyer descended from one of the old noble families of the German Empire. A key figure in the church resistance to Hitler and Nazism, he brought friends together from all over Germany after the war to start the spiritual reconstruction of a shattered people. How well he has succeeded with the *Kirchentag*, and the fraternal work in the Evangelical Academies, every student of postwar Germany well knows. The real "German miracle" of these years has not been the economic or political or military; it has been the resurrection—like the phoenix, mythological bird rising anew from the ashes—of the soul of a broken people.

As the "Rally of the Church" was held in 1961, the people was divided but no longer broken. For, even in the area of persecution under the Communists, the *Kirchentag* casts long rays of hope and promise into an otherwise dark and oppressive future. And in the West German republic, with its fantastic industrial output and wealth, the laymen's movements have been of critical importance in rebuilding the morale and spirit of whole sections of the society. Today, "The Undivided Church in a Divided City" (to use the title of a TV program about Berlin) places in a dramatic way the claims of the Universal Christian Church over against the "false Cosmism" that is communism. Most of the men who were once leaders in the struggle against Nazism have gathered to the standard of the church in her struggle on this frontier with communism.

Not all have, and a minor embarrassment of the rally this time was that Martin Niemöller—whose

quixotic temperament has often in the past led him to dramatic but sometimes untimely demonstrations of "individual conscience"—cooperated with the political authorities in a demonstration in Communist Erfurt at the same time that the *Kirchentag* was bringing together tens of thousands from both sides of the demarcation line in a divided Germany. This year the Communists launched an especially bitter and unyielding attack on the rally. They forbade the holding of public *Kirchentag* events in East Berlin, even though they have not been able to stop services in the churches. They forbade attendance by their subjects at the *Kirchentag* services, discussions and other events, and have turned away hundreds at the border control points.

In spite of all efforts, however, the line in Berlin covers such a large area that well over 10,000 participants from the Communist East did manage to get through. During *Kirchentag* week the tide of refugees from East Germany climbed to 8600; several times during recent weeks, as the international situation threatened that the Berlin "escape hatch" might be closed, the number of refugees from the Communist-controlled area climbed to 1500 a day.

Thus, while Niemöller and one or two other German isolationists (called "neutralists" here) tried to sell the idea that for Germans there isn't much to choose between the East and the West, the people who have had to live in the Communist East continue to give their answer. Martin Niemöller lives in the West, enjoys its privileges and comforts, and can idealize the People's Democracy from a distance. But those who know it at first hand come West when they can't stand any more. When they are Christians and still trying to stick it out, they come to the "Rally of the Church"—even if they have to come illegally.

The *Kirchentag* has long since ceased to be, in spite of its tremendous influence here, a German affair. Indeed, with transportation into Berlin the way it is, next to East German participation, the most remarkable thing is the week-long attendance of some 1300 delegates from sister churches all over the world. In addition to considerable delegations from all over Europe, Africa and the Americas are especially well represented. At the major assemblies, as well as in the discussion groups, native Christians from Northern Rhodesia, Nigeria, Ghana, etc. made key speeches. No one doubted that the "younger churches" moved to the fore in the thinking of the German lay movement. Then, too, there were strong delegations here from fraternal movements—"Kirk Week" in Scotland, *De grote*

DR. LITTELL was founder and, from 1953 to 1958, Chairman of the Ecumenical Committee of the *Kirchentag*. He teaches church history at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.

*This article was written prior to the sealing off of East Berlin.

Trek in The Netherlands, *Rassemblement Protestant* in France, etc.

The ecumenical movement, the church universal, was visible in strength. And it is this that especially aroused the ire of the Communists, whose dogma it is that the universal faith of scientific man is dialectical materialism and that the churches of the religious ("superstitious") are withering away. Since the dogma can't be wrong for a Communist, the Eastern press was full of virulent attacks on the *Kirchentag*. The movement was accused of all kinds of secret political intentions, pro-Western and sinister. The greatest possible use has been made of disgruntled statements by Niemoeller and his associates.

The universal church, this time represented by the *Kirchentag*, rallied in Berlin at just the right moment of world history. And the slogan of the rally was just the right one: the promise of the Lord of the Church, "Lo I am with you always. . . ." And the Christians were there, even from the ends of the earth.

For an American Protestant, the most remarkable thing of all is the way the *Kirchentag* seizes hold of the most sensitive and difficult issues of conscience before the church and deals with them in prayer, study and discussion. The interest group most popularly attended and intensely participated in was that on the relation of Jews and Christians.

Right at the time of the Eichmann trial, with the terrible guilt of Hitler's "final solution" still hanging over Middle Europe, thousands gathered to discuss the crime of anti-Semitism and the responsibility of Christendom for its recurrence. The study materials, circulated by the hundreds of thousands of copies before the event, carried pictures from Dachau and Buchenwald and queries on the guilt of Christians in the years of the Third Reich. A leading rabbi addressed the assembly and participated with a Christian sociologist and a theologian in leading the discussion. Imagine comparable spiritual strength and courage on the part of American Protestants: a rally of masses of Christians in the Southeast, called by the churches, with major attention to the crime of racialism and a key address by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.!

But the *Kirchentag* has the enormous advantage of being founded on the Barmen Declaration (1934) of the churches against Nazism, and the Stuttgart Declaration (1945) of guilt and repentance. It stands in the line of the *Kekennende Kirche* ("confessing," or "witnessing," Church). It is built not on the sands of a shallow "spirituality" and in-

1961 01100

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY
PHIL-RELIG & EDUC PER
5201 WOODWARD AVE
DETROIT 2 MICH
9095 9-61R A

verted religious individualism, but on the rock of the Word of God made flesh in Jesus Christ. Our American churches, still by and large happily lodged in the world of the 19th century, have not yet begun to preach the baptism of repentance that precedes the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Not only do we look for no miracles of grace, but we wallow in the desperate anxieties produced by an historical moment of which we are not worthy and to which we are not equal. We could, if we would, learn from the *Kirchentag* where the renewal of the church and the rejuvenation of a people must begin.

CORRESPONDENCE

Continued from page 166

getting there, doing it and getting back—except to watch TV? And even as dull a pageant as Miss America seems fresh by comparison with the smaltz and rough house stuff that is usually on . . .

So once a year a guy who punches time clocks for a living gets to look long at a strange, pretty face (if his attention rises that far!), and you want to call that idolatry worse than Mariolatry? Fie on you, Harvey Cox, and you, *Christianity and Crisis* (Tempest-in-a-teapot!). Between you'n the John Birch Society; me for the beatniks!

(The Rev.) CHESTER J. HEWITT
Chicago, Ill.

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 WEST 121 ST. • NEW YORK 27 • N.Y.

EDITORIAL BOARD

REINHOLD NIEBUHR AND JOHN C. BENNETT, *Chairmen*
WAYNE H. COWAN, *Managing Editor*
WILLIAM C. ADEN, JR., *Assistant Editor*
M. SEARLE BATES WALDO BEACH AMOS WILDER
ROBERT McAfee BROWN F. ERNEST JOHNSON
ROGER L. SHINN HENRY P. VAN DUSEN
RICHARD T. BAKER J. OSCAR LEE
TOM F. DRIVER ROBERT W. LYNN
KENNETH W. THOMPSON WILLIAM LEE MILLER

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

HENRY SMITH LEIPER JOHN A. MACKAY
FRANCIS P. MILLER M. M. THOMAS
WILLIAM F. MAY J. B. DUROSELLE
HERBERT BUTTERFIELD SIDNEY LANIER

CONTENTS

THE PLURALITY OF RELIGIONS: BLEMISH
OR BLESSING?

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

THE UNDIVIDED CHURCH IN A DIVIDED CITY

FRANKLIN H. LITTELL